

# Metadiscourse Markers and Persuasion in Saudi Influencers' Snapchat Advertising Discourse

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**Abstract**—This qualitative study investigated persuasion in advertising discourse posted on Snapchat by Saudi influencers through the lens of metadiscourse markers. The data for this study was gathered from recordings of advertised snaps posted by 20 Snapchat influencers (10 males and 10 females). The discourses were analysed using Hyland's (2005a, 2005b) metadiscourse markers. The findings indicated that stance markers were the most frequently employed (54.7%), with attitude markers (20.5%) being the most common, followed by self-mention (18.7%), boosters (12.2%), and hedges (3.3%). Engagement markers constituted 45.3% of the findings, with hearer mentions (22.5%) being the most prevalent, followed by directives (16.7%), questions (4.2%), personal asides (1.6%), and appeals to shared knowledge (0.3%). The study concluded by examining the implications for marketing that could improve persuasive advertising discourse from a linguistic standpoint, in addition to providing suggestions for future research endeavors.

**Index Terms**—persuasion, advertising discourse, metadiscourse markers, Saudi Snapchat influencers, advertisements

## I. INTRODUCTION

“As individuals, we are all influenced, our opinions shaped, reinforced, and altered by our exposure to the media” (Sánchez Macarro, 2002, p. 13). This quotation by Sánchez Macarro (2002) reflects how the media play a significant role in shaping people's opinions and decisions. It becomes apparent that the language encountered in the media possesses distinct characteristics, including specific contexts, intentions, and formats (Perrin, 2013). The term *media* in the twenty-first century encompasses far more than simply traditional print and broadcast mediums, including platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter (currently X) (Cotter, 2015). In this modern age, individuals are constantly connected to their phones, making digital platforms an integral part of their lives. This continuous connectivity exposes them to a wealth of information, leading many to be deeply immersed in the digital realm with screens always within reach.

Given the power wielded by digital media, it is important to consider the potential impacts of advertising in this context. According to Kitis (1997), advertising can be seen as “a discourse that epitomizes powerful language” (p. 304). Her statement suggested that advertisers use language effectively to shape consumer behavior and influence their target audience. Because advertisements manipulate language and have underlying ideologies, they can be considered as an influential form of media discourse (Liyanage, 2020). As Danesi (2015) put it, advertising discourse “is part of the broader social discourse that people tap into on a daily basis in various ways and to various degrees” (p. 3). It is worth noting that some researchers in the field, such as Cook (2001), Danesi (2015), and MacRury (2008), have classified advertising as a genre.

In his book, Cook (2001) stated that “discourse, especially discourse as complex as advertising, always holds out more to be analysed, leaves more to be said” (p. 5). Simões (2023) pointed out that advertisements are ideal illustrations, in the eyes of discourse analysis, of the various functions discourse can play in society. As previously noted, for Al-Subhi (2022), advertising represents a distinct form of cultural and social discourse that wields the capacity to persuade audiences through a multitude of creative strategies. Vahid and Esmae (2012) also suggested that, given the way that advertisements reflect society, the way that they convey meaning and messages, and the impact they have on our daily lives, they can be viewed as a form of discourse.

However, little is known about persuasion in advertising discourse by social media influencers. As Marie and Zibin (2020) highlighted, this field of study, especially in the Middle East, has yet to receive sufficient attention. Moreover, the literature on metadiscourse in advertising is relatively scarce (Al-Subhi, 2022; Lai, 2023; Xia, 2020). Therefore, this work seeks to fill this gap by analysing the persuasive and metadiscourse markers in the advertising discourse of Saudi

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influencers on Snapchat.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse is “the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community” (Hyland, 2005a, p. 37). As Hyland (2017) defined it, it is how “writers and speakers interact through their use of language with readers and listeners” (p. 16). Dafouz-Milne (2008) referred to metadiscourse as “those features which writers include to help readers decode the message, share the writer’s views, and reflect the particular conventions that are followed in a given culture” (p. 97). Therefore, metadiscourse serves as a tool for managing interactions and structuring the organisation of the discourse.

By introducing the interpersonal model, Hyland (2005a) pointed out that there are two interaction dimensions that are acknowledged by the model as being the components that make metadiscourse. This interpersonal model offers an inclusive view of metadiscourse, suggesting that we constantly monitor our communication, both consciously and unconsciously, making decisions about the effects we have on our listeners or readers (Hyland, 2017). The model has received the greatest attention in applied linguistics due to its importance in highlighting the interactive nature of communication (Hyland et al., 2022).

In this model, the first dimension is interactive, involving the writer’s awareness of the participating audience, including how they attempt to take into account the audience’s likely knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations, and processing capacities (Hyland, 2005a). Thus, rather than focusing on experience, the use of the resources in this category addresses strategies for structuring discourse.

The second is the interactional dimension, which relates to how writers engage with one another by interjecting themselves and making comments about their writing (Hyland, 2005a). When this occurs, according to Hyland (2005a), metadiscourse is understood as being primarily critical and interactive, expressing solidarity, foreseeing criticism, and answering hypothetical questions from others. In this case, interactive and interactional components are related aspects, which result in metadiscourse becoming a coherent collection of choices that draw from both organisational and descriptive attributes (Hyland, 2017).

Subsequently, Hyland (2005b) sought to develop a cohesive framework for interpersonal discourse that encompasses and integrates these constituent elements and their emerging dynamics (see Figure 1). He explained that there are two primary ways in which authors manage these interactions: stance and engagement. Stance is an attitude-based dimension that reflects how writers express their opinions, judgments, and commitments; whereas engagement is a dimension of alignment, in which writers interact with readers, acknowledging their presence and involving them in the discourse (Hyland, 2005b). He also added that engagement involves leading readers through the argument, addressing doubts, and guiding them toward specific interpretations.

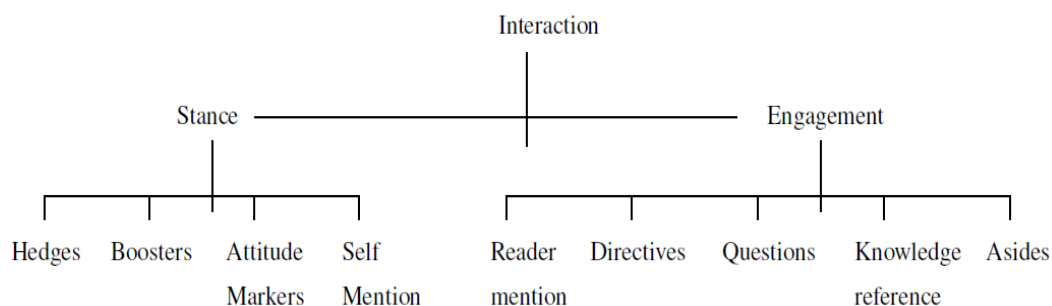


Figure 1. A Model of Interactional Metadiscourse by Hyland (2005b, p. 177)

This study explores the spoken genre of metadiscourse markers, distinguishing it from studies that explore the written genre, which has been the focus of more extensive research. Therefore, this analysis is strictly concerned with interactional aspects and is guided by the work of Hyland and Zou (2021, 2022), who conducted analyses of thesis presentations, classifying them as a spoken genre.

### B. Metadiscourse Markers and Advertising

The intersection of metadiscourse and advertising is an important area that warrants further examination. Gustafsson (2018) used Hyland's metadiscourse markers to analyse how companies employ language and discourse strategies on their websites to attract and retain customers for continued product purchases. He found that they used persuasive language within metadiscourse using stance markers such as boosters and self-mentions as well as engagement markers.

Al-Subhi (2022) examined the use of both linguistic and visual metadiscourse markers in social media advertisements and their impact on persuasive communication. She analysed the linguistic metadiscourse markers in data gathered from Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter (currently X) and found that stance markers were more frequently used than other types of engagement markers, serving as effective persuasive tools. Attitude markers were the most used among stance markers and directive markers were the most used among engagement markers. Al-Subhi's (2022) findings suggested that metadiscourse plays a crucial role in shaping discourse, engaging audiences, and capturing consumer attention, thereby constituting an essential component of persuasive writing.

Lai (2023) also studied the occurrences and functions of interactional metadiscourse in the British fashion magazine *Cosmopolitan* in 2022, with a special focus on the role of such markers in shaping persuasive discourse. The results showed that engagement markers were the most prevalent forms of metadiscourse, suggesting a deliberate emphasis on engaging with and influencing consumer perspectives. The study ultimately determined that interactional metadiscourse markers substantially contribute to the effectiveness of advertising persuasion strategies.

In addition, Liu and Cheng (2025) examined the use of interactional metadiscourse by streamers in Chinese live streaming commerce. Their findings revealed that the promotional speeches used in streamers were rich in interactional metadiscourse. Among stance resources, self-mentions and boosters were frequently used, whereas hedges and attitude markers were less common. Engagement markers mainly included hearer mentions, followed by questions and directives, with minimal use of personal asides and shared knowledge. These metadiscourse markers contribute to the interaction. The researchers concluded that various linguistic resources can be employed by streamers to enhance interaction with viewers.

All the studies mentioned above (Al-Subhi, 2022; Gustafsson, 2018; Lai, 2023; Liu & Cheng, 2025) focused primarily on written advertisements, with only Al-Subhi (2022) including both written and visual advertisements. The researchers all carried out their analyses on advertising campaign data posted on websites, magazines, or social media platforms. Nevertheless, there remains a notable gap in research concerning metadiscourse within advertising discourse, particularly with content produced by Snapchat influencers, as no studies have yet been published on this topic.

### *C. Research Question*

The existing gap in the literature highlights the importance of conducting further research on the persuasion and metadiscourse markers within advertising discourse, especially as it is delivered verbally by Snapchat influencers. Consequently, this study seeks to explore the following research question:

Which metadiscourse markers do Saudi influencers use to persuade their audiences when advertising on Snapchat?

## III. METHODOLOGY

### *A. Research Design*

This study implemented a qualitative approach in order to investigate the research question. For the purpose of data analysis, content analysis was used to analyse the data. Dörnyei (2007) noted that content analysis is fundamentally linked to qualitative research, asserting that "since qualitative data is usually textual, QUAN content analysis has been adapted for use in QUAL research" (p. 245).

### *B. Pilot Study*

This research included a preliminary pilot phase prior to the main study. Following the pilot, we were able to revise and reevaluate certain procedures, which enhanced our ability to address these aspects more effectively. For instance, we altered our method for selecting influencers for the analysis. In the initial pilot study, we depended on a marketing company to provide a list of the top influencers. However, this approach was inadequate, as we recognised the need to encompass a wider range of perspectives rather than relying on a single source. Consequently, for this study, we adapted and modified the methodology proposed by Banjar (2023), which involved distributing an online survey to a diverse group of individuals. The objective was to collect responses from participants regarding the names of Saudi influencers they regularly follow.

Furthermore, adjustments were implemented to refine the criteria for selecting influencers. In the pilot study, we limited the influencers' characteristics to those from a single region in Saudi Arabia, which significantly reduced our options to a very small number of influencers. Additionally, during the data analysis, we found that the QDA Miner software was effective for counting the frequency of the metadiscourse markers in each influencer's discourse.

The pilot study also allowed us to estimate the number of participants (influencers) required for our research. Given the constraints of time, we included only three male influencers in the pilot phase. However, it became evident that this limited number was insufficient to adequately address the study's research questions, highlighting the need to incorporate female participants as well. Consequently, we have decided to expand the sample size to a total of 20 participants, comprising 10 male and 10 female influencers. As noted by Sandelowski (1995), "determining an adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgment and experience" (p. 183).

### *C. Data Collection*

According to Jucker (2018), utterances are regarded as the primary analytic units in the field of pragmatics, and he stated that "the data of any pragmatic research is language used in actual contexts" (p. 4). Jucker further contended that recordings of speech made without the researcher's involvement represent the most authentic data, rendering them "ideal for pragmatic research" (p. 23). He also noted that radio and television broadcasts, which exemplify spoken public discourse conducted independently from researcher presence, can serve as suitable sources for analysis.

Consequently, to examine persuasion within metadiscourse markers in advertising discourse on Snapchat, we gathered the data from the Saudi influencers via their Snapchat accounts. The methodology involved recording the advertising content shared by the influencers in their stories at the time of data collection.

#### D. Participants

The study sampled 20 influencers, consisting of 10 males and 10 females. For further clarification, Table 1 has been arranged to display pertinent information regarding the influencers, including their identification, follower count, and the frequency of their mentions in the survey.

We employed *criterion sampling*, which involves selecting participants "who meet some specific predetermined criteria" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 128). To maintain a balanced approach in characterising influencers, we adhered to specific criteria for the selection of Snapchat influencers. The criteria included: (1) they must be Saudis; (2) they should have a minimum of 500,000 followers; (3) their accounts must be publicly accessible and verified; and (4) they must be active users on Snapchat.

Moreover, to reduce the possibility of bias in the selection process, an online survey was conducted in which respondents were asked to provide a list of Snapchat influencers they regularly follow and view. The names of influencers that were frequently mentioned by participants in the survey and met the established criteria were subsequently included in the analysis. This approach was similar to that employed by Banjar (2023) for the selection of influencers for her study.

TABLE 1  
RELATIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE INFLUENCERS

Male			Female		
Influencer's identification	Number of followers on Snapchat	Frequency	Influencer's identification	Number of followers on Snapchat	Frequency
Influencer M1	1M	18	Influencer F1	5M	27
Influencer M2	2M	13	Influencer F2	7.0M	21
Influencer M3	2.2M	13	Influencer F3	3.7M	10
Influencer M4	4.5M	12	Influencer F4	5.6M	10
Influencer M5	3.5M	12	Influencer F5	3.3M	9
Influencer M6	1.2M	9	Influencer F6	1.2M	9
Influencer M7	1.5M	6	Influencer F7	3.8M	8
Influencer M8	2.1M	5	Influencer F8	735K	7
Influencer M9	5.5M	4	Influencer F9	3.0M	4
Influencer M10	2.4M	3	Influencer F10	4.3M	3

#### E. Procedure

This study employed a content analysis of the transcribed data. The process of data collection and analysis was organised into four distinct phases. In the initial phase, following the completion of the survey, we began to monitor the Snapchat accounts of the influencers and documented their advertisements during this time. Subsequently, we transcribed the recordings using Microsoft Word to aid in the analysis and organised the data for enhanced comprehension.

Third, we initiated the data analysis by using QDA Miner software, a tool designed for coding, organisation, retrieval, and examination of document sets. Employing QDA Miner for coding and quantifying the frequency of metadiscourse markers facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the data. Hyland and Zou (2021, 2022) were used to guide the analysis of metadiscourse markers when working with the data (see Appendix A). Following the coding process, the next stage involved the interpretation of the results.

#### F. Data Types

A total of 88 advertisements were gathered from Saudi Snapchat influencers, resulting in approximately 27,329 words. The advertisements examined in this study encompassed different products and services. These included items related to beauty and personal care, clothing, electronics, home goods, online shopping and education platforms, e-commerce services, travel agencies, supermarkets, healthcare clinics, banking and financial services, cleaning services, restaurants and cafes, as well as food and beverage products.

#### G. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are fundamental elements of research. In terms of validity Félix-Brasdefer (2007) stated that "natural data represent the most valid way of observing different aspects of speech-act" (p. 159). The study also ensured

its reliability by implementing the inter-rater reliability technique during the data coding process. To assess the consistency among the raters, the percentage agreement was used as a measurement tool. The results indicated a 98% agreement in inter-rater reliability, demonstrating a strong consensus between the primary researchers and the other raters regarding the coding of the data.

#### H. Ethical Considerations

Tagg and Spilioti (2022) highlighted that the distinction between public and private platforms can influence the necessity of obtaining consent. They stated that "the general principle is that the more public the site and the more open the access to it, the less urgent is the need to protect participants' privacy" (p. 96). Consequently, it can be inferred that since the influencers' accounts are publicly accessible and officially designated as such, informed consent is not required for data collection.

Although all sampled influencers engaged in public promotion of their products, this study does not disclose their authentic names or identities. Instead, pseudonyms are used; for example, the first male influencer is designated as Influencer M1, while the second female influencer is referred to as Influencer F2. Furthermore, the names of the products and brands mentioned in the influencers' promotional content have been anonymized and are represented as XXX.

## IV. RESULTS

As presented in Figure 2, the metadiscourse markers were predominantly characterised by stance (54.7%) and engagement (45.3%). The following paragraphs explore each category individually, accompanied by some examples.

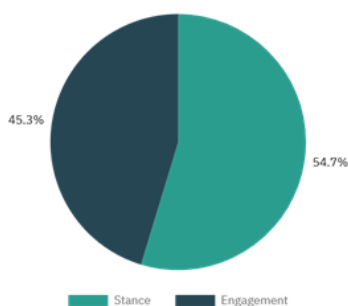


Figure 2. The Variation of Metadiscourse Markers in the Collected Data

#### A. Stance Metadiscourse Markers

Although the Saudi Snapchat influencers employed different stance markers, the attitude markers constituted approximately 20.5% of the metadiscourse markers employed by the Saudi Snapchat influencers in their discourse. An example of this marker is: *It means some waffle robes, when you buy them, are made of light fabric, but this one has excellent quality* (Influencer F8, an advertisement for a company specialising in robes).

Self-mention markers emerged as a commonly used metadiscourse category, accounting for about 18.7% of the markers employed by the influencers. For example: *Of course, I ate it; it was delicious* (Influencer F6, an advertisement for a restaurant).

Booster markers comprised around 12.2% of the metadiscourse markers used in the influencers' discourse. An example of such markers is as follows: *Of course, XXX is a restaurant that no two people would disagree on* (Influencer M5, an advertisement for a restaurant).

Hedge markers constituted about 3.3% in the stance markers. For instance: *Because for almost two or three years, every Saturday, they must come to our house* (Influencer M1, a cleaning company advertisement).

#### B. Engagement Metadiscourse Markers

As shown in the visualisation presented in Figure 2 above, a notable 45.3% of engagement markers were employed by influencers in their content. Furthermore, an analysis of the data revealed that the Saudi Snapchat influencers used a range of engagement markers. Hearer mention markers represented a substantial portion of the engagement markers, comprising approximately 22.5%. For example: *They also have stylish food warmer available if you have an occasion or invitation* (Influencer F10, an advertisement for a food industry brand).

Directive markers accounted for roughly 16.7% of the metadiscourse markers. An example in this category include: *So, take advantage of these offers they have* (Influencer F3, an advertisement for a perfume store).

Questions were raised in roughly 4.2% of the metadiscourse markers. For instance: *Do you want to see what the package is?* (Influencer M10, an advertisement for sleep-related products).

Personal asides were also incorporated in approximately 1.6%. An example include: *If they knew that this would come to them, they would plow through the papers* (Influencer M10, a watch advertisement).

In relation to appeals to shared knowledge, the occurrence of appeals classified as routine conditions was approximately 0.2%. For example: *Of course, XXX uses fresh vegetables, chicken, and meat **daily*** (Influencer M5, an advertisement for a restaurant).

On the other hand, those invoking familiarity with tradition accounted for about 0.1%. For instance: *I expect **everyone knows** about the 'We Sorted It Out in Summer' promotion at XXX* (Influencer F1, an advertisement for a cookware store).

However, there were no distinct markers identified for appeals to shared knowledge based on logical reasoning.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Metadiscourse Markers and Persuasion in Saudi Snapchat Influencers' Advertising Discourse

As previously outlined in the results section, this study indicated that the Saudi Snapchat influencers used stance markers more frequently (54.7%) than engagement markers (45.3%). Within the category of stance markers, attitude markers were the most used, followed by self-mention, booster, and hedge markers. Among engagement markers, hearer mention markers emerged as the most prevalent, succeeded by directives, questions, personal asides, and appeals to shared knowledge.

The findings of this study align with Gustafsson's (2018) finding that stance markers serve a significant role in employing persuasive language within metadiscourse. Al-Subhi (2022), Elzouka (2024), Kashiha (2022), and Liu and Cheng (2025) also found that stance markers were employed more frequently than other types of engagement markers in their research. In contrast, Lai (2023) found that engagement markers represented the most prevalent forms of metadiscourse overall.

In detail, in the context of stance markers, advertisers strategically employ attitude markers to emotionally influence consumers, which ultimately facilitates persuasion through dominantly positive emotions such as those associated with surprise and joy at the advertised products (Lai, 2023). Consequently, attitude markers significantly enhance the main message of advertisements by reinforcing their persuasive power through the strategic use of favourable adjectives to portray the products positively (Al-Subhi, 2022).

Thus, it can be stated that the Saudi Snapchat influencers use attitude markers as a deliberate strategy to express their opinion or evaluation of a specific subject using emotive expressions (Kashiha, 2022). It is also important to acknowledge that additional categories of stance markers, including self-mention, booster, and hedge markers, contribute to the overall persuasive effect on the audience.

The inclusion of self-mention markers in advertising discourse has been shown to enhance the speaker's credibility and reinforce their position (Kashiha, 2022; Liu & Cheng, 2025; Zou & Hyland, 2022), which may increase the persuasive power of advertisements. Additionally, the use of boosters effectively communicates a strong sense of certainty and authorial commitment in the assertions made, thus enhancing the persuasiveness of the speaker's message to the audience (Kashiha, 2022).

Specifically, within the context of advertising, boosters are frequently employed to strengthen the perceived reliability of a product's attributes, while simultaneously engaging audiences and persuading them of the validity of the arguments presented (Lai, 2023; Zou & Hyland, 2022). According to Zou and Hyland (2022), boosters are essential for engaging the audience and persuading them of the importance of the arguments' validity.

Thus, the strategic incorporation of booster markers by advertisers plays a crucial role in constructing a positive image of the product, reflecting their endorsement and enthusiasm, which in turn enhances consumer confidence and intent to purchase (Lai, 2023). Alkhodari and Habil (2021) stated that "certainty markers without hedges seem too harsh, while hedges alone appear soft" (p. 350). Accordingly, Lai (2023) also reported that the use of hedging language can soften the tone of the message, further enhancing its persuasive effect on the audience.

With regard to engagement markers, the pronounced tendency of the Saudi Snapchat influencers to employ hearer mention markers appears to create a sense of connection, encouraging their participation, and promoting acceptance of the advertisers' perspective (Lai, 2023). Consequently, the integration of second-person pronouns in advertising plays a crucial role in cultivating a sense of unity and connection between brands and consumers (Al-Subhi, 2022). This, in turn, enhances interactivity and engagement within the communication process (Al-Subhi, 2022), which may significantly influence the persuasion process.

Moreover, the use of questions has been found to be an effective strategy for engaging audiences, as it enables the presentation of the primary proposition and fosters a direct dialogue with audiences, hence securing their attention (Kashiha, 2022). Lai (2023), additionally, noted that advertisers occasionally use informal questions to further involve consumers in the interactive process.

The use of personal asides demonstrates a level of intimacy with the audience and conveys confidence, as this technique enables the speaker to deviate from the main discussion in order to acknowledge their relationship with the audience (Hyland & Zou, 2022). Furthermore, in appeals to shared knowledge, the incorporation of references to common knowledge can effectively engage the audience as collaborative participants by drawing upon their assumed

understanding of broader, everyday concepts (Hyland & Zou, 2022). In addition, Kashiha (2022) observed that referencing appeals to shared knowledge can function as an influential persuasive tactic by highlighting widely accepted concepts and values, thus fostering an audience's shared understanding.

In conclusion, according to Liu and Cheng (2025), metadiscourse strategies in online shopping promote an engaging digital communication experience, encouraging viewers to experience a sense of mutual interaction and to develop imagined friendships with streamers.

### *B. Marketing Implications*

The findings of the current study indicated important implications for the field of advertising, particularly from a linguistic perspective. Prudencio et al. (2023) demonstrated that linguistic manipulation significantly influences marketing strategies employed by influencers, emphasizing the vital role of language in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors. This discovery underscores the importance of language in the development of advertising content. Furthermore, an analysis of the present study, along with a review of pertinent literature, reveals that influencers, brand managers, and advertising agencies should develop a more profound understanding of the significance of metadiscourse markers in crafting persuasive messages aimed at their audiences.

The influencers, brand managers, and advertising agencies may find it important to use a variety of metadiscourse markers in their advertisements. They may need to use self-mention markers to create a personal connection and to promote a feeling of belonging and community through the use of plural pronouns. Likewise, they may need to employ hearer mention markers to cultivate a sense of closeness with their audience.

Boosters should also be employed in advertisements as they are important in establishing a sense of certainty, enhancing credibility, and fostering trust in the advertisements presented by the influencers. A study by Pezzuti et al. (2021) revealed that messages conveying a sense of certainty significantly enhance consumer engagement. Additionally, influencers and advertisers should not overlook the importance of using hedges, as they enable them to express their opinions without appearing overly authoritative and help to mitigate the impact of their stronger statements.

The significance of personal asides in advertising should also not be underestimated, as they help create a sense of closeness with the audience and convey confidence. These remarks enable the speaker to temporarily shift away from the main subject to recognise their relationship with the audience (Hyland & Zou, 2022). Additionally, incorporating appeals to shared knowledge markers can actively engage the audience by tapping into their assumed familiarity with everyday concepts (Hyland & Zou, 2022). Therefore, it is advisable for influencers and advertising firms to incorporate these strategies into their advertisements.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study indicated that stance markers were used more often (54.7%) compared to engagement markers (45.3%). Within stance markers, attitude markers (20.5%) were the most used, followed by self-mention (18.7%), booster (12.2%), and hedge markers (3.3%). With regard to engagement markers, hearer mention markers (22.5%) were the most prevalent, followed by directives (16.7%), questions (4.2%), personal asides (1.6%), and appeals to shared knowledge (0.3%). The limitations of the present study were primarily associated with its sample size, as a larger participant group could improve the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the analysis focused solely on spoken or orally communicated data, excluding nonverbal and multimodal elements present in the influencers' social media content. While these nonverbal cues may influence persuasive outcomes in advertising discourse, they fall outside the scope of this research. This study recommends that future research should focus on an in-depth analysis of several key areas. Researchers are encouraged to explore the role of multimodal discourse in conjunction with linguistic features in the creation of persuasive messages designed to engage consumers. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of advertising discourse across different platforms, such as TikTok, could reveal variations in persuasive strategies employed. The study also advocates for the inclusion of diverse methodologies, such as interviews, to gain insights into how advertisers intend to utilize language to persuade their intended audiences and invoke emotional reactions. Additionally, it would be beneficial to obtain perspectives directly from consumers regarding the specific metadiscourse markers that influence the persuasion process. Conducting experimental studies, particularly within the Saudi context, could significantly enhance our comprehension of these dynamics.

## APPENDIX. METADISOURSE MARKERS GUIDELINE

<p><b>Stance</b></p>	<p><b>Hedges</b> withhold complete commitment to a proposition and open a discursive space allowing others to dispute Interpretations.</p> <p>E.g., "It <i>might</i> sound simple but my research has only become possible with new technology" (p. 6)</p> <p><b>Boosters</b> help writer/speakers present their work with assurance and shut down alternative voices.</p> <p>E.g., "In order for me to <i>truly</i> determine the effectiveness of these races, I need to subject them to real-life extreme stresses and see how they perform" (p. 6)</p> <p><b>Attitude markers</b> indicate affective, rather than epistemic, attitudes to propositions, conveying surprise, agreement, frustration and so on.</p> <p>E.g., "However, I also witnessed <i>incredibly</i> creative strategies being used to address these challenges" (p. 8)</p> <p><b>Self-mention</b> is the writer/speaker's intrusion in the text through use of first-person to emphasise their contribution.</p> <p>E.g., "<i>I</i> want you to think about this" (p. 10)</p>
<p><b>Engagement</b></p>	<p><b>Reader mentions</b> bring readers into a discourse through second person pronouns, particularly inclusive we which identifies the reader as someone who shares a similar perspective to the writer. (in this context will be hearer mentions)</p> <p>E.g., "What if I told <i>you</i> that there's a way to go back in time and see if the water flea survived during the 1930s Dust Bowl?" (p. 30)</p> <p><b>Directives</b> are instructions to the reader, mainly expressed through imperatives and obligation modals, which direct readers a) to another part of the text or to another text, b) how to carry out some action in the real-world, or c) how to interpret an argument.</p> <p>E.g., "Now, <i>think back to earlier</i> when you were queuing at the boarding gate" (p. 34).</p> <p><b>Questions</b> invite direct collusion because they address the reader as someone with an interest in the issue the question raises and the good sense to follow the writer's response to it. These questions function to check understanding, evoke a response or seek agreement.</p> <p>E.g., "<i>Guess what?</i> Females are more visible in these narratives than they were 50 years ago" (p. 35).</p> <p><b>Appeals to shared knowledge</b> are explicit signals asking readers to recognize something as familiar or accepted. They assume tradition, logical reasoning or routine.</p> <p>E.g., "<i>It is well known</i> that it's very much like a piece of string that lives in an album itself" (p. 39).</p> <p><b>Personal asides</b> briefly interrupt the argument to offer a comment on what has been said, adding more to the writer-reader relationship than to propositional development.</p> <p>E.g., "<i>By the way, I believe understanding history can change the future</i>" (p. 40).</p>

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